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SUBJECT: TURF WARS - RIVAL GOS FORCES CREATE A CHAOTIC AND
MILITARIZED DARFUR

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Rivalry and competition between government security agencies, paramilitary units, and proxy forces have led to a chaotic, violent, and militarized environment in Darfur, according to multiple and varied sources in North and South Darfur. These contacts (from UNAMID, DPA signatories, and non-signatory rebel movements) all stated that although the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) has "final say" in the region, this ongoing competition has created ever-changing fiefdoms and militarized zones. Sources stated that one of the most prominent conflicts, between the Ministry of Defense's Border Intelligence Force and NISS's Central Reserve Police resulted in both civilian and military deaths on August 28. END SUMMARY

RIVALRY IN GOS FORCES

2. (SBU) Almost all contacts separately stated that rivalries within the Government's security apparatus has created a chaotic, militarized, and explosive environment in Darfur. This is in addition to a fragmented mosaic of feuding and thieving rebel groups rampaging throughout the region. UNDSS North Darfur Director Francis King told poloff that the Khartoum Government "completely lost control in Darfur long ago." King stated that there are many different government groups, militias, and paramilitary forces and "each of these has a different fiefdom controlled by changing military and NISS directors that do not like each other." NISS ultimately is on top of the hierarchy of competing agencies through the security committee at the state level, while the local police have essentially no weight in policy, strategy, and planning, said King. Khartoum can only manage this chaos, according to King, by regularly rotating out these officials and "leaving behind no transfer of knowledge." King emphasized that just as UNAMID officials are building a working relationship with NISS and military officials in Darfur, Khartoum transfers these individuals to different posts to disrupt the working relationship. SLM-Minnawi South Darfur leaders (Suliman Nourain, Omar M. Ibrahim, Sam Hama' and Muhaya Younis) also separately agreed that "the whole country is controlled by NISS."

3. (SBU) UNDSS South Darfur Chief Abdallah Janakat reported to poloff that the Central Reserve Police and Border Intelligence Forces openly fought in the market of Mershing (70 km north of Nyala) on August 28. Janakat stated that unconfirmed reports state that the fight resulted in the deaths of 18 GoS fighters and several civilians. Later UNAMID reported that one Fur civilian was killed in the clash and eight others were wounded. (The report did not list GoS casualties.) The UN also reported that on August 29, the Deputy Wali of South Darfur traveled to Mershing and paid blood and compensation money for the incident to relatives and tribal leaders/

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Kalma IDP camp). Janakat's UNDSS colleague in North Darfur, King,
separately noted that CRP is better equipped and trained than other
forces in Darfur. King said in the last several months the CRP have
received brand new vehicles and weapons and have deployed in
increasing numbers throughout Darfur. Janakat and many other
observers emphasized that NISS controls the CRP from Khartoum,
unlike other forces such as the Border Intelligence Force.

¶5. (SBU) Some former janjaweed have been incorporated into the CRP, but it is a highly professional force, noted King. Kamal Haj Daoud, the Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator for SLM/MM, told poloff that half of the CRP is made up of supposedly more trustworthy northerners of the same tribes as the ruling Khartoum elite, while the others are Darfur Arabs from where the janjaweed have been drawn.

¶6. (SBU) King stated that some CRP units have been used to provide force protection for UNAMID and WFP convoys. "I spoke with some of my UNAMID colleagues and they were very impressed with the CRP's reconnaissance - they were scouting ahead, using unpredictable patterns, and taking high places in a very professional manner," stated King. King said that after 3 straight days with the CRP, his UNAMID colleagues "shared stories around the campfire and many of the CRP guys were quite open about their past activities and associations [as janjaweed and GoS proxy forces.]"

KHARTOUM 00001352 002 OF 002

BORDER INTELLIGENCE FORCE AND ITS FINANCIAL STRAIN ON GOS

¶7. (SBU) According to Daoud, the Border Intelligence Force is a less refined force, filled almost entirely with former janjaweed and controlled by the Ministry of Defense at the state and local level. This force is less well equipped and less disciplined than its NISS counterparts, noted both King and Janakat. Janakat stated that the integration of the janjaweed into the BIF and other state security forces has affected the GoS financially. Previously, the GoS only paid the janjaweed for each operation they conducted, but now these fighters receive monthly salaries. (NOTE: In the spring of 2008, there was fighting between government forces in the El-Fasher market between different government forces protesting over a delay in payment of monthly salaries. End Note.) Janakat also emphasized that Arab militias and janjaweed groups previously had flexible structures. When the GoS needed larger militia forces, it could contact militia leaders who could easily recruit hundreds of men at a time for a one-payment mercenary operation. Janakat stated that now some of these forces are on a continual GoS payroll as Khartoum tries to buy their loyalty.

MILITIAS AND ARAB TRIBES

¶8. (SBU) King stated that some areas of Darfur are semi-autonomous, left alone as "the stronghold of independent and disaffected Arab tribes." King noted that one such area around Kabkabiya is renowned for its banditry and hijacking committed by these groups - something the GoS is either unable or unwilling to control. King stated that these groups occasionally come into El-Fasher and clash with the GOS security forces. King emphasized that these Arab militias "completely dominate the area" and have established private checkpoints between Kabkabiya and Tawila. Janakat separately stated that in South Darfur, almost every tribe has its own militia. The GoS has armed many of these tribal elements, and when necessary, attempts to play them off one another. Much of the bloodiest fighting in Darfur in 2007-2008 has been between Arab tribes both heavily armed by Khartoum (the most notorious being the range war between the Tarjum and Abbala Rizeigat that has claimed hundreds of dead to date).

CHECKPOINTS

¶9. (SBU) Janakat stated that travel overland is greatly complicated by these competing forces. For example, stated Janakat, the Nyala to Kas road has over seven different check points, three of which are operated by the CRP, three others by their rivals in the BIF, and one by a semi-autonomous Arab militia group. Janakat said that each of these forces has its own taxation, security, and travel regulations, while bringing little security to the roads that they control.

COMMENT

¶10. (SBU) Most observers in Nyala stated that the CRP was responsible for the August 25 Kalma Camp attack. This bodes poorly for Darfur, if these units (described as Sudan's most elite and well-trained) quickly lost control and indiscriminately fired on a lightly armed group of IDP demonstrators. It is even more startling, if as contacts claim, all CRP units (including the unit used in Kalma camp) are directed by NISS headquarters in Khartoum, and not the local government in Nyala. As the GoS faces growing external pressure in the face of an ICC indictment and internal fractures in the GoS may grow, the BIF and CRP will be two security

forces to watch in the coming months. The GOS must prove that it can maintain control over these forces if it hopes to keep its hold on power in Darfur, but in reality the regime's grip is tenuous at best. It is only the strongest of many armed, ruthless, and disaffected elements in the region - a perfect storm of anarchy intentionally created by the NCP and now slipping away from its ability to manipulate. If the regime loses control of these forces to the extent that they continue to fight each other and disobey orders, the chances of an internal struggle within the regime can only grow. It also means even more ominous news for Sudan: not that the regime won't stop bad behavior in Darfur, but that it no longer can, even if it had the political will to do so.

FERNANDEZ